



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION CAMPS SELECTED FOR PILOT
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CHILDREN'S DEFENSE
FUND**

More than 160 boys in two Los Angeles County juvenile probation camps have been selected to participate in the Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools program, an innovative educational program that stresses writing, reading, self-esteem and the joy of learning from June 24 to July 26.

The nonprofit Children's Defense Fund, founded by Marian Wright Edelman, a national leader in children's advocacy, has reached more than 90,000 youth nationwide through its Freedom Schools program. The program at Miller High School in Malibu and Afflerbaugh High School in the City of LaVerne is the first of its kind in California. At the Freedom School camps, boys participate in interactive learning by reading out loud, singing and learning critical thinking skills.

The Children's Defense Fund, which created Freedom Schools in 1995, is partnering with the Los Angeles County Office of Education, which provides the educational programming within the camps, the county Probation Department which supervises the camps, and the Office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. Together, Camps Miller and Afflerbaugh serve approximately 160 young boys ranging in ages between 14 and 18. LA County's incarcerated population is approximately 60 percent Latino, 30 percent African American and 5 percent other.

"At these sites, young people whose lives have been interrupted and affected by crises, will be given more attention, consistent and enthusiastic feedback for their learning achievements," said Supervisor Ridley-Thomas. "As their education improves,

these young men will begin to see their potential and will rise to higher expectation levels. This is good for them but also for our society.”

The Freedom Schools Program at Miller and Afflerbaugh is part of a broader effort to reform education at the Los Angeles County probation camps. It complements the Road to Success Academies implemented by LACOE, which emphasize interactive learning and positive feedback rather than punitive measures to educate youths. Additionally, the Freedom Schools program reflects a cultural shift in how youths in the county juvenile justice system are rehabilitated.

“The expansion of CDF Freedom Schools into juvenile detention facilities is a critical development for a country that cares about its children and youth —especially those who are most at risk and in need,” said Wright Edelman.

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